



**A monthly publication of
United Church of Christ, First Congregational
Norwich, NY**

www.uccnorwichny.org



CONTACT US

11 West Main St. Norwich NY 13815
607-334-3434
office@uccnorwichny.org

CHURCH OFFICE HOURS

Monday - Thursday
8:00 a.m. - 3:00 p.m.
(closed 12:00-1:00 p.m.)
Friday
8:00 a.m. - 12:00 p.m.

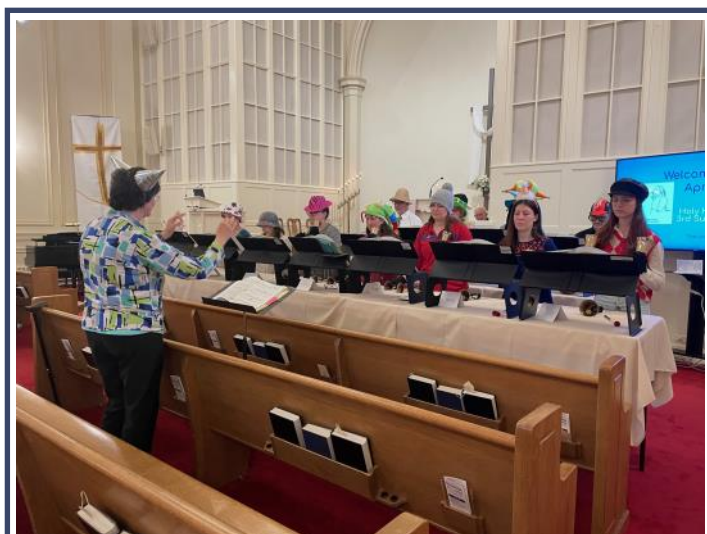
WORSHIP SERVICES

Sundays, 10:00 a.m. in the Nave
[Click here for live stream.](#)
[Click here for Covid Safety protocols.](#)

Ministers: All the People
Pastor and Teacher: Rev. Jason Boyd
Moderator: John Kolb
Director of Music Ministries: Mary Williams
Organist: Jason Handy
Organist Emeritus: Bob Oehme
Director of Children and Youth Ministries:
Ericka Tyler
Parish Coordinator: Cheri Oakley
Financial Assistant: Jennifer Mallozzi

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The Bell Choir joining in the fun on Holy Humor Sunday, April 23, 2023.

God's Doors are Open to All



From the Pastor

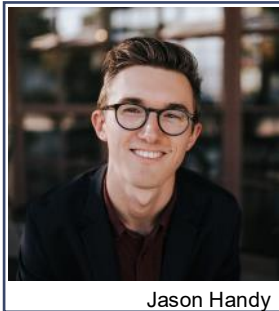
Rev. Jason Boyd

Farewells are interesting things. I remember leaving home for my first job after college and how different it was emotionally than leaving home just to go to college a few years before. I remember leaving the east coast nearly a quarter century ago for the next chapter of my life in Seattle with a mix of sadness for leaving friends behind, but excitement to be going to what was one of my favorite cities.

The Gospel text before the events of Holy Week and Easter include the Farewell Discourse: words of Jesus to his followers before the crucifixion, but which reminded us, as in John 16, "I will see you again." I think about this often. Whenever I officiate a graveside service, I include these words. You may have already noticed that in every celebration of life I officiate, I include thoughts on the word "goodbye," that we may again be reminded that the word is not really a farewell but a wish that God be with you.

I'm thinking about that today as I write this.

We know that our organist extraordinaire Jason Handy will be departing Norwich soon. His last Sunday here is Pentecost Sunday, May 28. Yes, that means a goodbye. Jason and his husband Brad will be moving to New York City to begin the next chapter of their lives together. I am very sad to see them go. But I am also excited for them. No two stories are the same, but I remember how excited I was to be moving to Seattle a quarter century ago. I am straining not to pull a "when I was your age" right now (sadly, I am that old, haha), but I hope and pray that as this move unfolds they experience every last bit of joy, excitement, and adventure that I did when I left DC for Seattle.



Jason Handy

Please be aware that Jason has requested that we not hold a luncheon or farewell liturgy for him, and we will of course honor his wishes. In your own hearts, I ask you to lift him up, celebrate his gifts, rejoice for all that he has shared with us – and of course remember and celebrate the gifts Brad shared with us as well during his time here. I want to ask you to each do this. I say this knowing full well he is reading this :). Beloved ones, this is your time and opportunity to write down in the form of letter or card how grateful you are for his ministry here. Tell him of the joy his gifts brought to you. Lift him up with praise for how he shared his own calling with us. Make sure he knows how he touched your heart.

Yes, we will be saying goodbye, but let's use the word right. When the moment comes, even though there is a departure, let us offer Jason and Brad that wish and blessing. God be with you. As you move from the

Chenango Valley to the Big Apple, God be with you. As you discover heretofore unimagined wonders, God be with you. As you learn anew each day how much God rejoices in your love for one another, God be with you. As you are opened to new possibilities for the blessings of your life together, God be with you. And in whatever else you face, God be with you.

Jason, thank you for allowing me to share in the gifts God has given you. You have blessed me, as has Brad. God be with you always.

Blessings,

Pastor Jason



It's Annual Report Time

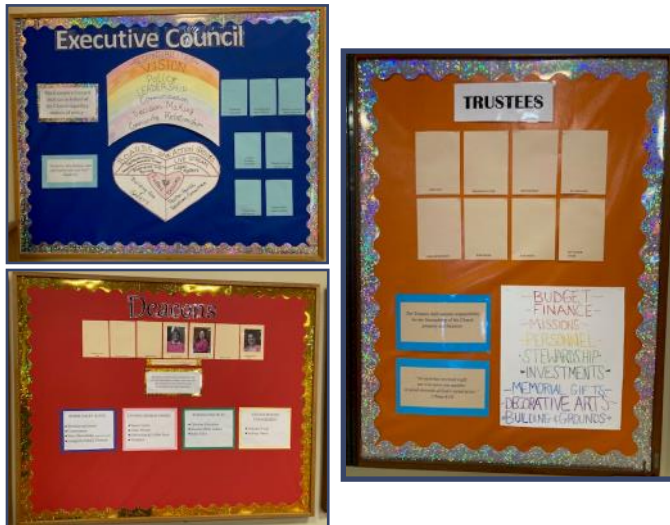
If you are responsible for one of the following, please get your report to the church office by May 31st.

Executive Council
Nominating Committee
Board of Trustees
Memorial Gifts Committee
Board of Deacons
Historian
Director of Youth & Children's Ministries
Knitting Group

Copies of last year's reports are available from Cheri Oakley, Parish Coordinator. Email her at office@uccnorwichny.org or call 607-334-3434 and leave a message.

Founders Room Update

The bulletin board improvements are well underway. The Executive Council, Trustees and Deacons Boards are nearly done. The next step will be to post photos of current board members. We are still working on Missions and Christian Education.



Children and Family Ministries

Ericka Tyler, Director

Hello Sunday School Families!

During our current series, entitled REAL, we have been focusing on how to develop friendships that are genuine. Despite having had two Sundays off for Easter and Holy Humor Sunday, we have still had time to enjoy playing pool, foosball, and checkers together after our lessons! The kids have also enjoyed reading our weekly scripture passages out loud for each other. So far, we have discovered that real friends choose each other wisely and show each other grace, just like Jesus did.

As we continue to learn more about developing true friendships over the next couple of weeks, it is also important to remember that we are each different yet equally important in God's eyes. Preteens/teens are unique humans with their own experiences, perspectives, and stresses. While there are some universal truths about what teens need in order to feel loved and to thrive, this video (<https://youtu.be/y5deuuSZbr0>) serves as a good reminder that no two teenagers think exactly the same. Parents, you are doing an amazing job getting to know the child you are raising and loving them for who they are. Keep it up!

Below are two of the scripture verses we've been practicing.

Real friends choose each other wisely:

Walk with the wise and become wise; associate with fools and get in trouble.

—Proverbs 13:20

Real friends show each other grace:

Love prospers when a fault is forgiven, but dwelling on it separates close friends.

—Proverbs 17:9

Remember, Sunday School is held during the worship service, right after the Children's Moment! God Bless!



Our Church Has a New Logo!



Ryan DeTomi, formerly of Norwich, NY has designed a logo for our church. Current Board Members and Church Officers considered seven design options before voting to accept the one featuring our church steeple and a rainbow background. You can expect to start seeing this new logo incorporated into our printed materials and online presence in the next few months.

Community Honors Banquet

by John Kolb

Once again it is that time of year that the Norwich community is organizing an Honors Banquet, the 26th annual, to celebrate the scholars of the Norwich High School graduating class.

The students honored this year represent some of the most hard-working students at NHS, having achieved an overall average of 90 or above in their high school career.

We expect the cost of the project to be around \$3,500. We are now soliciting funds from a broad base in the community— businesses, churches, and individuals, asking for donations and support. If you are interested in financial support of this **Community Event**, one which honors our students for their achievements, all donations, **large or small**, are welcome.

Sports teams have booster clubs. We ask for your support because our “All-Academic Team” does not have its own booster club. We want to show this year’s graduates that their community is proud of them, and that we stand behind them as they plan to go out into the world.

To be clear: without **your** support— **community support**— there would be no celebration. Students will receive a list of all the donors who contribute to this event.

An account is set up at the Norwich school district office for donations. Contributions can be made out to the **Norwich City School District** and sent to **Attention: Wendy Burdick, Norwich City Schools, 89 Midland Drive, Norwich, NY 13815, .**

Please put a memo on the check which says: **Community Honors Banquet**. This is helpful.

Again, this is about our “All-Academic Team,” and academics is the core mission of our schools. On the next page of this newsletter, you will find a list of the students being honored. If you happen to see any of them, take a moment to say, “Job well done.” And, if you choose, please support this event, which recognizes their achievement, by contributing.

If you have any questions, please feel free to contact me or High School Principal Jacob Roe.

Thank you for your help.

2023 Norwich Honors Students

Elsbeth Hunter	Parker Wier
Emma Brooks	Nathan Franklin
Kaitlyn Zieno	Harrison Matlack-Grey
Donovan Gillen	Nicole Sitts
Drew Brooks	Caleb Nichols
Adrianna Palmer	Madison Vaughn
Elli Ryan	Madisyn Ryan
Caiden Lewis	Cameron VanHouten
Mason Edwards	Zander Sutton
Isabella Natoli	Kyle Linger
Allyson Manwarren	Jesse Little
Kaylee Hamilton	Elle Sherry
Aleksander Smietana	Blake Bennett
Sarah Davis	Logan Waters
Natalee Franklin	Ethan Guzewich
Megan Lindridge	Brianne Miner
Alexandria Fink	Grayson Boyer
Nora Thompson	Erin Smith
Alexandra Roque	Kaleb Turner
Halie Rotundo	Olivia Joslyn



Music Ministries

Mary Williams, Director

Two special anthems are planned for this month:
May 21 “I Will Rise” featuring a small Women’s Ensemble

May 28 Pentecost Sunday “The Spirit Sings” which quotes two Spirituals- *Every Time I Feel The Spirit* and *I’m Going To Sing When The Spirit Says Sing*. Anita Humer will join Jason Handy for a four-hand piano accompaniment.

The Bell Choir has a new rehearsal space upstairs in the former Sunday School Classroom. We have renamed the space **The Belfry**. (Hopefully, there will be no bats there... only bells!).

MAY 2023

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
	1 10:00 a.m. - UCC Knitting Group, kitchen 10:00 a.m. - Prayer Circle, Zoom 3:00 p.m. - Tai Chi, Founders Rm. 3:00 p.m. - J. Handy Lessons, upstairs	2 1:00 p.m. - Piecemakers, Kitchen 3:30 p.m. - E. Fischer Lessons, Nave	3 9:00 a.m. - Home Bureau, Founders Rm. 10:00 a.m. - Prayer Circle, Zoom 7:00 p.m. - Choir Rehearsal, Nave	4	5 9:00 a.m. - 1:00 p.m. Rummage Sale - Half Price at First Baptist Church, 10 W Park Place, Norwich <div> May 5, 9:00 a.m. - 7:00 p.m. May 6, 9:00 a.m. - 2:00 p.m. Rummage Sale at Broad St. UMC, 74 N. Broad St., Norwich </div> 10:00 a.m. - Prayer Circle, Zoom 3:00 p.m. J. Handy Lessons, upstairs	6
7 9:00 a.m. - Nursery 10:00 a.m. - Worship/ Communion Sunday School 11:00 a.m. - Coffee Hour 11:30 a.m. - Bell Choir 2:00 pm. Executive Council, Zoom 6:00 p.m. - LGBTQ+ Fellowship, Zoom	8 10:00 a.m. - Prayer Circle, Zoom 3:00 p.m. - Tai Chi, Founders' Rm. 3:00 p.m. - J. Handy Lessons, upstairs 7:00 p.m. - Monday Evening Musical Club Scholarship Winners Recital, Nave	9 1:00 p.m. - Piecemakers, Kitchen	10 9:00 a.m. - Home Bureau, Founders Rm. 10:00 a.m. - Prayer Circle, Zoom 7:00 p.m. - Choir Rehearsal, Nave	11 1:00 p.m. Piecemakers Monthly Meeting, Founders Rm., kitchen 5:30 p.m. CV Free Church Prom Closet - prom dresses and accessories for a refundable \$20 deposit. 4299 NY-23, Norwich.	12 10:00 a.m. - Prayer Circle, Zoom 3:00 p.m. J. Handy Lessons, upstairs	13
14 9:00 a.m. - Nursery 10:00 a.m. - Worship, Sunday School 11:00 a.m. - Coffee Hour 11:30 a.m. - Bell Choir 6:00 p.m. - LGBTQ+ Fellowship, Zoom	15 10:00 a.m. - UCC Knitting Group, kitchen 10:00 a.m. - Prayer Circle, Zoom 3:00 p.m. - Tai Chi, Founders Rm. 3:00 p.m. - J. Handy Lessons, upstairs 7:00 p.m. - Deacons Meeting, Zoom	16 1:00 p.m. - Piecemakers, Kitchen 3:30 p.m. - E. Fischer Lessons, Nave	17 9:00 a.m. - Home Bureau, Founders Rm. 10:00 a.m. - Prayer Circle, Zoom 4:00 p.m. Laundry Love at Byrne Dairy. See p. 7. 6:15 p.m. - Democratic Committee, Founders Rm. 7:00 p.m. - Choir Rehearsal, Nave	18 4:00 p.m. - J. Handy Students Dress Rehearsal, Nave 5:00 p.m. Emmanuel Soul Kitchen Free Take-out Meal, 37 W. Main St., Norwich 6:00 p.m. Helping Hands Giveaway at the Norwich YMCA	19 10:00 a.m. - Prayer Circle, Zoom 7:00 p.m. - J. Handy Students Recital, Nave, Mayflower Rm.	20
21 9:00 a.m. - Nursery 10:00 a.m. - Worship, Sunday School 11:00 a.m. - Coffee Hour 11:30 a.m. - Bell Choir 6:00 p.m. - LGBTQ+ Fellowship, Zoom	22 10:00 a.m. - Prayer Circle, Zoom 3:00 p.m. - Tai Chi, Founders Rm.	23 1:00 p.m. - Piecemakers, Kitchen	24 9:00 a.m. - Home Bureau, Founders Rm. 10:00 a.m. - Prayer Circle, Zoom 7:00 p.m. - Choir Rehearsal, Nave	25	26 10:00 a.m. - Prayer Circle, Zoom	27 9:00 a.m. Diaper Give-away at First Baptist Church in Norwich
28 Pentecost Sunday 9:00 a.m. - Nursery 10:00 a.m. - Worship, Sunday School 11:00 a.m. - Coffee Hour 11:30 a.m. - Bell Choir 6:00 p.m. - LGBTQ+ Fellowship, Zoom	29 Memorial Day <i>Church Office Closed</i>	30 1:00 p.m. - Piecemakers, Kitchen 3:30 p.m. - E. Fischer Lessons, Nave 6:00 p.m. - NHS Scholarship Awards Ceremony	31 9:00 a.m. - Home Bureau, Founders Rm. 10:00 a.m. - Prayer Circle, Zoom 7:00 p.m. - Choir Rehearsal, Nave			

We've Got Mail



Dear Friends,

On behalf of the American Red Cross, thank you for your generous gift which will be applied to disaster relief. Support from companies like yours is truly making an impact in the lives of those we serve every day.

During their darkest hours, people know they can turn to the Red Cross for comfort and care. Our humanitarian mission of preventing and alleviating human suffering in the face of emergencies depends on the compassion of our generous donors.

Red Cross Supporter, I am profoundly grateful for your commitment to the Red Cross mission. Thank you once again for standing with us to help turn heartbreak into hope.

Gail J. McGowen, President and CEO
American Red Cross

Dear UCC,

We were able to complete about 400 tax returns resulting in savings of tens of thousands of dollars for our taxpayers. That's due to the dedication and hardwork of our volunteers in the Tax-Aide program. Also, special thanks to our partners at UCC, Cheri, Eric and the Board, as well as Heidi and Amberly at the Chenango County Area Agency on Aging. Know that our taxpayer neighbors appreciate your partnership roles enabling us to provide our services for them.

Thank you all.

Bernie Iantosca
AARP Tax Aide program

Dear Friends,

On behalf of the BTS Center, I want to thank you for your generous gift. Your support means so much to us and to all who are part of our growing circle of friends. With roots dating back to 1814, the BTS Center is a private foundation in Portland, Maine building on the legacy of the former Bangor Theological Seminary. Although no longer a degree-awarding institution, today The BTS Center seeks to catalyze spiritual imagination, with enduring wisdom, for transformative faith leadership by offering theologically grounded programs of continuing education and vocational formation all oriented

around our programmatic focus: Spiritual leadership for a climate-changed world.

With God's help, your gift blesses us with the resources and the encouragement to equip and support faith leaders who seek to discern and embody a radically reoriented vision of what it means to be God's people in the world. How grateful we are for your generous support!

Rev. Allen Ewing-Merrill,
Executive Director, The BTS Center

Dear Friends,

Thank you so much for your generous donation to Family Planning of South Central New York. With your support, more individuals in Broome, Cortland, Chenango, Delaware and Otsego are able to access local, affordable, and compassionate reproductive medical care and comprehensive sexual health education. Your donation helps so many, including a patient who visited recently: "I had been putting off necessary care for financial reasons and Family Planning of South Central NY made it possible for me to get the care I needed."

Your commitment means the world to us, and we couldn't do it without you.

With gratitude,
Debra Marcus, CEO
Family Planning of SCNY

Dear Members of UCC,

On behalf of the volunteers and clients that are part of Our Daily Bread Food Pantry, we want to thank you for your generous donation. We are now giving families a 5-day/15-meal package and we have increased the amount of milk that we give each household on the milk voucher. Your donation will help with the purchase of additional food that we need to be able to do this. We couldn't provide food for the numbers of people that we're feeding without generous donations like yours. With the increase in food and gas prices, we have seen an increase in the number of families coming to the pantry for the past few months. We are happy that we can be there to assist families.

Gratefully yours,
Barbara and Gary Tompkins
Co-Coordintors
Our Daily Bread Food Pantry



laundry love.

Laundry Love Norwich at Byrne Dairy Laundromat

Third Wednesday of the Month

Laundry Love is a national organization that washes the clothes and bedding of low/no income families and person(s) across the US. Locally, they are paying for laundry for those who are struggling to make ends meet. Volunteers will be on hand the Third Wednesday of the month 4:00 - 6:00 p.m at the Byrne Dairy laundromat to greet people, facilitate payment for the machines and distribute cleaning supplies.

- There are no income requirements.
- This is on a first come first served basis.
- You must sign in (just your first name) prior to loading the washer.
- Volunteers do not touch the laundry.
- Individuals - 2 loads (one 20 lb. machine - approx. one 13-gallon trash bag)
- Families - 6 loads (approx. three 13-gallon garbage bags)
- Last Wash in at 5:30 p.m.

Donations are our only source of funding. You can help by donating through Pure Charity <https://purecharity.com/fundraisers/laundry-love-fundraiser-for-norwich> Every penny donated is used right here in Norwich. For more information about Laundry Love, visit www.laundrylove.org. To volunteer or if you have any questions, email: <mailto:cclaundrylove@gmail.com>



Monday Evening Musical Club

presents

Advanced Students and Scholarship Winners

May 8, 2022 at 7:00 p.m.

United Church of Christ, 11 West Main St., Norwich

Livestream at [Facebook.com/mondayeveningmusicclub](https://www.facebook.com/mondayeveningmusicclub)

Since 1954, MEMC has been awarding scholarships to high school seniors going on to study music. Come and hear these talented students perform!

Prayer Concerns

Let us keep in our prayers the following concerns:

- ♦ families, families that may be going through particularly difficult times, families seeking God's guidance;
- ♦ those who are moving because of their work, those looking for work, and those looking for meaning in their work.
- ♦ those who are ill, who are recovering from illness or surgery, or who anticipate going to the hospital.
- ♦ those who grieve over the death of someone they love.
- ♦ our church, that it might be faithful to its calling, our pastor, all staff members and committees.
- ♦ peace in the world.
- ♦ gay, lesbian and bisexual and transgendered persons, and all those who feel isolated and alone.
- ♦ all those affected by the worldwide Covid-19 Pandemic
- ♦ People of Ukraine and Russia

OUR PRAYERS AND SYMPATHY TO:

Jamie and Matt Maholchic for the death of Jamie's mother, **Evelyn Boyles** on April 5, 2023.



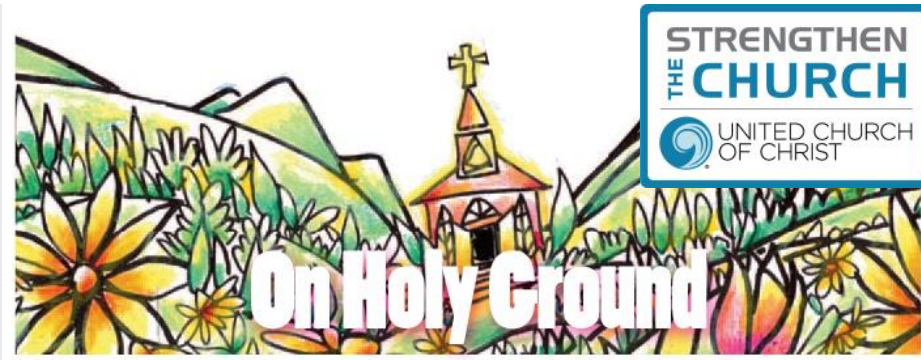
May Celebrations

Birthdays

- 6 Beth Garry
- 8 Luci Yantz
- 13 Nathaniel Garry
- 14 Marcos Flindt
- 17 Josh Borfritz
- Joanne Ferguson
- 20 Tim Carson
- 23 Terri Yantz
- 24 Aria Maholchic
- 25 Todd Bachman
- 29 Mary Williams

Anniversaries

Gary and Vicki Gray - 5/7/1966 - 57 years
Miranda and William Hunter 5/27/2000 - 23 years



We will collect the Strengthen the Church Offering on May 28th.

The Strengthen the Church (STC) Offering reflects the shared commitment of people across the United Church of Christ to cooperatively build up the UCC. Conferences and the national setting equally share the gifts given by members and friends through their local congregations. The funds raised support leadership development, new churches, youth ministry, and innovation in existing congregations.

As God calls our congregations to be the church in new ways, your generosity will plant new churches, awaken new ideas in existing churches and develop the spiritual life in our youth and young adults. By your generosity to this offering, you build up the Body of Christ.

ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED

United Church of Christ
First Congregational
11 West Main Street
Norwich, NY 13815-1612